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REMARKS**Status of Claims**

Claims 1-28 are pending in the instant application. Claims 1-28 stand rejected. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1 and 15 have been amended to delete the term "adjacent" and insert therefore "juxtaposed". No new matter has been added and support for the amendment can be found in the specification on page 6 and in Fig. 1.

Applicant respectfully requests that the amendments be entered.

Rejection of Claims 1-28 under 35 USC §103

Claims 1-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. 5,484,642 in view of U.S. 5,445,693.

The Office states that it would have been obvious at the time of invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the threads of Bompard et al. (U.S. 5,484,642) as tows as shown by Vane (U.S. 5,445,693) in order to provide bundles of parallel monofilaments which eliminates the yarn forming step, i.e., spinning. The Office further states that concerning the specific size of the tows, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to choose from a number of different sized tows including those specific sizes set forth in the claims since such a modification would have involved a mere change in the size of a component.

Applicant claims (claim 1; in part, as amended herein):

"...each of said first tows is juxtaposed to at least two of said first second tows thereby defining a channel..."

Nowhere do Bompard et al. nor Vane teach or suggest this feature of Applicant's claimed invention. As taught in Bompard et al. (col. 6, lines 40-46), "The material shown comprises two layers 41,42 consisting of traditional fabrics respectively comprising interlaced threads 41a, 41b and 42a, 42b. According to the

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invention, unit threads 43 are arranged between the fabrics 41,42....” Further, Fig. 5 of Bompard et al. fails to teach or suggest “each of said first tows is juxtaposed to at least two of said first second tows”, as Applicant claims.

Applicant submits that the combination of the Bompard et al. and Vane references does not establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the applied reference must teach or suggest all claim limitations. The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. Further, the fact that the claimed invention is within the capabilities of one of ordinary skill in the art is not sufficient by itself to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness without some objective reason to combine the teachings of the references. See MPEP §2143.

Claim 15 has been amended as follows (in part):

“d. spacing at least two of said first tows juxtaposed to at least one of said second tows in a single layer thereby forming a channel.

Claim 15 is believed to be allowable for the reasons stated above with regard to claim 1. Claims 2-14 ultimately depend from claim 1 and claims 16-28 ultimately depend from claim 15 and contain the limitations thereof.

Neither Bompard et al. nor Vane teach all claim limitations of Applicant’s invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the 103(a) rejection of claims 1-28 be withdrawn by the Office.

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Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejections is requested. Allowance of claims 1-28 at an early date is solicited.

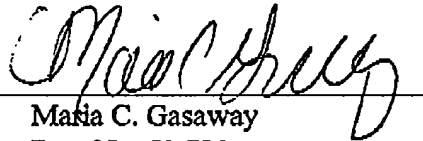
The Examiner is invited to telephone the Applicants' undersigned agent at (740) 321-7213 if any unresolved matters remain.

If any questions should arise with respect to the above Remarks, or if the Examiner has any comments or suggestions to place the claims in better condition for allowance, it is requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' agent at the number listed below.

Applicant authorizes any fees required pertaining to this response be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0568.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


Maria C. Gasaway
Reg. No. 51,721

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Owens Corning
2790 Columbus Road, Bldg. 11-7
Granville, OH 43023
(740) 321-7213

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